

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

NOVEMBER 1977 NO. 27

10p

HACKNEY SAYS 'NO' TO RACISM

The largest anti-racist march ever seen in Hackney passed off virtually without incident on Sunday 16 October when thousands of people, from both inside and outside Hackney joined together to march from Shoreditch to Victoria Park. And the message came clearly from them all, black and white: "Kick the Nazis out of Hackney".

The National Front and their hooligan supporters were separated from the anti-fascists by a massive police cordon. Their opposition was never very strong and was confined mainly to a group of hecklers when the march passed the Colville Estate in Hoxton and another group, protected by the police's elite Special Patrol Group in Brick Lane.

Several dozen young boys of about 12 ran alongside the march most of the way, shouting slogans like "We're the future of the country". They were encouraged by older youths who were often dressed in khaki combat "uniform". One of these was seen to flash a knife at the end of the march.

There were 13 arrests in all. Nearly all of these were NF supporters. The most serious incident occurred at Mile End Tube Station when some of these were involved in a clash with a black London Transport employee. The other arrests occurred in Hoxton and at Brick Lane when individuals attempted to break up the march. One group of fascists were told by police to take down a Rhodesian flag.

The march was supported by 2 of Hackney's MPs, Stanley Clinton Davis and Ron Brown, and more than half of the Borough Councillors. Members of many political parties and many trades unionists supported the march and there were groups from many other parts of London.

Fascist activity in Hackney and the rest of East London has not been reduced since the last issue of Hackney People's Press.

Following the arson attempt on the Centerprise bookshop in Kingsland High Street an attempt was made to destroy the offices of the Socialist Workers Party in Shoreditch. Much office equipment and leaflet stock was destroyed.

And, as we go to press, it has been revealed that the NF have published a newspaper, Bulldog, to be circulated to schools in East London. This urges young white children to "spread the racist message".

We too have a message to spread. But ours is an anti-racist message and it is vital that we drive it home to the fascists. "Black and white unite! Hackney doesn't want the Front. Get out!"



The mass demonstration winds out of the mist into Mare Street.
Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

BIGGER THAN BEFORE

HPP GOES MONTHLY!



If you are a regular reader of Hackney People's Press you'll notice that this issue of the paper is a larger size than you're used to. This is a big step forward for the paper because we are now trying to produce it regularly, each and every month, and also trying to distribute it more widely throughout Hackney.

So we hope that we are going to welcome many new readers to this issue. For the benefit of new readers, Hackney People's Press is an alternative, non-profit making newspaper produced for the people of Hackney by people who live in Hackney. It is YOUR paper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to help us. We have no Editor, no shareholders, no commercial advertising, no party-political backers. No-one gets paid by the paper and all the decisions are taken collectively

by those who work on it. You can tell us what you think about the paper, or volunteer to write or work on the next issue at an open meeting to be held on Tuesday 15 November at 8 pm in Centerprise.

Hackney People's Press is YOUR paper. Come along!

One final point: our regular readers will notice that we've had to put the price of the paper up, to 10p. This increase is just to cover the cost of printing the larger editions that we will be publishing from now on. As we've said, we don't make any profit - in fact, just to cover costs, we have to sell virtually every copy we produce. Furthermore, we promise that if our circulation should go up by enough so that we find we can produce even more copies, we will bring the price down again!

inside

- page 2 The scandal of Hackney's empty houses
- page 3 Short news
- page 4 Kingsmead fights back
Wilton's for the East End
- page 5 Attack on community newspaper
GLC Sales Bonanza
- page 6 Gasbag page
- page 7 Information
- page 8 Prize Crossword
Cartoons and pictures

THE SCANDAL OF HACKNEY'S EMPTY HOUSES

Just how serious is the housing problem in Hackney? There's no doubt that there could be much more accommodation if all the houses were used. But it is difficult to find out how many houses are not occupied. The National Empty Homes Campaign was set up in February this year to co-ordinate the campaign against the continued presence of empty houses at a time when 30,000 people are homeless in London and forced to squat.

It is proposed that a Community Housing Action Group should be formed to utilize empty housing in Hackney. The first task will be a borough-wide survey of houses to find out exactly how many houses are empty in Hackney. Here one of the members of the group explains the background to the campaign.

"Homelessness is undoubtedly the most direct and distressing measure of housing deficiency, and is of particular importance in Inner City areas such as Hackney" says a Council publication. However, the Council will not disclose how many homeless families exist, but admits that some 10,000 people are still waiting for Council homes. How much property in Hackney is left empty by the Council and private landlords - who together account for 89% of the housing stock - for months, even years, when at the same time there are hundreds of homeless families and thousands of people living in awful conditions?

In 1973 the chairman of Hackney Social Services said "I wish to emphasize that Hackney is an area of social, economic and housing stress". He stated that "we should mobilize all community resources" and went on to admit that this was not being done. It still isn't. In a section discussing homeless families he said that "provisions of all kinds of accommodation should be met from the housing pool ... the numbers of homeless families are increasing and further provision is needed", and yet he made no recommendation about how to approach the problem.

Empty property is a community resource that should and must be used. The existence of empty homes

done regularly" and it found that the problem of empty houses was increasing. The report recommended that "adequate steps should be taken to identify and monitor empty property" and that "the property gained could be used for housing homeless families in the short term and save large amounts of money - amounting to more than £400,000 in 1975 - now spent on bed and breakfasts. We would urge Hackney Council to examine closely existing procedures for dealing with the problem of empty property in Hackney", it concluded.

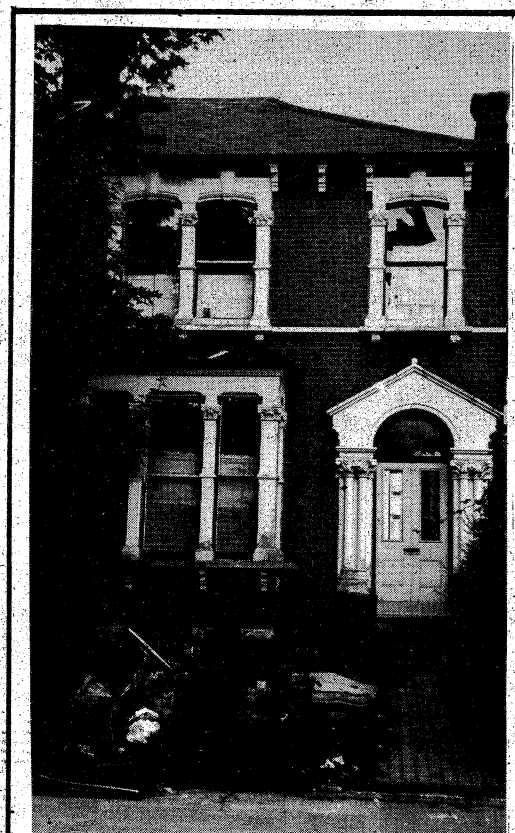
Little has been done since then. It is time to act, to find out how



bad the situation is and to pressurize the Council to make some real efforts. They are doing very little at the moment.

We want to form a new Group - a Hackney Community Housing Action Group - that will make sure our houses are properly used. The first project will be to organise a survey of all Hackney's housing. Such a large project requires a lot of volunteers, and some really committed people who will be prepared to organise and co-ordinate. If you are concerned about the housing outrage in Hackney and can offer your help or any useful information, then contact us.

Hackney Community Housing Action Group, c/o Centerprise 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

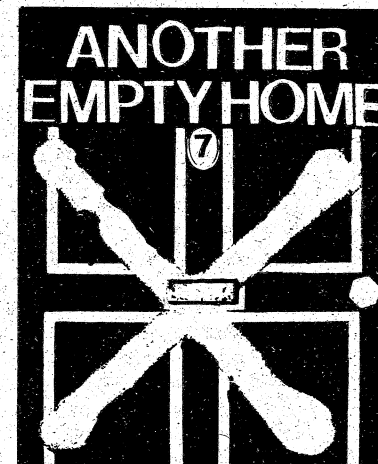


The house above, 198 Evering Road, N16, was empty for three and a half years. It was featured in an article in the July 1975 edition of Hackney People's Press when it had been discovered that it then belonged to the Second Actel Housing Association, who had allowed it to become almost derelict. About three months ago builders moved in and the house is at last being converted into flats. A happy ending to a story, you might think, but here was a house that will have been unused for the best part of four years in an area of immense housing stress. How much better would it have been if it could have been used for all that time? And how many houses are there like it still in Hackney?

The National Empty Homes Campaign, to which Hackney Community Housing Action Group will be affiliated, is campaigning to abolish empty houses by 6 means:

1. Requisitioning. Councils should have more powers and use them - to take over empty homes.
2. Penal rating of empty homes.
3. Compulsory publishing of information. So the public can see who owns the empty houses.
4. More funds for short-life schemes.
5. Restoration of all cuts in Housing Expenditure.
6. Repeal of the Criminal Trespass Law. Squatting isn't a crime for many people - it's a necessity!

A mass poster campaign is also to be started - the illustration shows the poster which is printed with a vivid red cross - so that the public can be shown how many houses are empty. Posters can be obtained from NEHC, c/o 510 Harrow Road, W9. 10 for 75p, 50 for £2.50. Or order them from Hackney CHAG, c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.



is an outrage - an insult to the homeless and everyone finding difficulty in getting a place to live. There is a lot of property that could be used, we must try to get it used. A 1974 survey of empty property was done in 6 of the 21 wards in Hackney by the Hackney Housing Rights Group. It said "We feel such surveys should be



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Short News

Latin America Centre

A Latin America Centre has just opened in Hoxton Square, South Hackney. It will be a social and cultural centre for the many Latin American immigrant workers in London, most of whom work in the hotel and catering trades, where conditions are notoriously bad and wages low. The Latin America Centre will also provide a focus for the refugees from the military dictatorships in Latin America, many of whom have to start a new life here, separated from their families, and often unable to speak English when they arrive.

Daily English classes are already under way at the Centre, and it is planned to extend these and hold evening classes for those who work during the day.

Cultural events and Spanish classes are being arranged for the children of workers and refugees, and there will be handicraft workshops and music and drama groups. It is hoped that the Centre will offer the means whereby the Latin American population in London can become a part of the community. There will be regular social evenings, with music, dancing and theatre, and members of the public will be very welcome.

If you would like to become involved in the Centre, as a helper in any of the areas outlined above, or just to know what is going on, please drop in to 17 Hoxton Square, N1, or ring 739 2910.

workshop in trouble

The Workshop in Lenthall Road, E.8 badly needs support in its efforts to get funding from Hackney Council.

The Council's decision not to help cover the overhead costs has seriously jeopardized the Workshop's future, since other prospective grant-giving bodies are unwilling to give money for what they consider is the responsibility of the local council, or help with materials and equipment in such an unstable situation. Most of the grants from the Arts Council of Great Britain, given as workers' wages, have had to be re-channelled to pay rent and rates to Hackney Borough Council!

The Workshop has been operating its silkscreen and darkroom facilities for five years now, and the pottery for eighteen months, enabling hundreds of people, maybe you, to come and use its services and learn processes.

If you have been involved with the Workshop at some time, they would really like your support by writing to your local councillor. The Council needs strong evidence of the regard local users have of the Workshop, so if you want it to keep going, please make the effort to tell them so.

claimants union

The Claimants Union was set up as an organisation to bring together all those who have to claim state benefits of any kind, to fight for better welfare rights and to enable claimants to realise what they are entitled to. The Hackney branch has re-formed and meets every Friday at 11 am in Centerprise. All claimants are welcome to attend.

Freshwaters extort

Some tenants of two blocks of flats in Stamford Hill owned by Freshwaters, the notorious private property landlords, were recently told that their rents were going to be more than doubled, from £9 to £19 per week. The flats are Holmwood Court and Regents Court, both blocks built well before the war and occupied mainly by older tenants who have been there most of their lives.

The tenants have been represented at the rent assessment tribunal by Bob Darke of the Hackney United Tenants Federation who argued that at a time that workers are compelled by the Government to accept wage rises which do not even begin to match up with inflation, it was ludicrous to permit a private landlord to impose rent rises of 100%. The HUTF is campaigning now for an end to the whole "nonsense" of rent tribunals and assessment. We hope to bring you, meanwhile, what the decision of the rent officer is in this case. And tenants who are often elderly pensioners have to endure the worry and the misery brought on by the sharks from property companies of the likes of Freshwaters while he takes his time in coming to his decision.

playleaders

In the week of 21st-25th November the Factory, at 107 Matthias Road, N.16, is running a Playleaders Training Week (with creche available) which is open to all those who are interested in training to become playleaders. Full details from Joan Hanson at the Factory on 249 3066.

secrets march on court

The two journalists and one ex-soldier charged under the Official Secrets Act are expected to go to trial at the Old Bailey some time next year after the committal proceedings which start at Tottenham Magistrates Court on Tuesday 8th November. As was reported in the July edition of HPP, Duncan Campbell, a freelance technical journalist, and Crispin Aubrey, a reporter on Time Out and ex-Hackney People's Press worker, face charges under Section 1 and 7 respectively of the Official Secrets Act. John Berry, an ex-lance corporal who left the army seven years ago, is also charged under Section 1.

Month by month the case gets more and more absurd. In August, Duncan Campbell was further charged with being in possession of information which might be useful to an enemy. This information includes a collection of photographs of the Post Office Tower in London and similar towers in other parts of the country. Yet when a series of pictures of these towers, all of which can be seen for miles distant, was published a few years ago in the Sunday Times Magazine, no journalists were arrested.

At the TUC conference in September a resolution was passed unanimously supporting the charged

men and urging the replacement of the outdated Official Secrets Act with a Freedom of Information Act. This type of act operates well in both the USA and in Sweden and requires the state to show why information should be withheld from the public. Thus we should be able to know how much carpet there is on the floors of the Department of the Environment, or even the Ministry of Defence. If the USA, had secrets laws as strict as ours, we should reflect, then there would have been no exposure of the Watergate scandal. The CIA has often said how much they envy British laws.

The National Council for Civil Liberties, which is backing the ABC Campaign, has called a conference on the Official Secrets Act, to be held on Saturday 3rd December. Details can be obtained from the ABC Campaign, address below.

There will also be a march from Seven Sisters Tube to Tottenham Magistrates Court, on the morning of the first day of the committal proceedings, Tuesday 8th November. Assemble 8.45am. Please bring yourself, your friends and your banners.

ABC CAMPAIGN c/o Time Out, 374
Grays Inn Road, WC1. 278 2377.

tenants merger off

It looks as though the amalgamation between the Hackney United Tenants Federation and the Hackney section of the Association of London Housing Estates is off. The merger has fallen through because the ALHE has always seen itself as purely a federation of tenants associations while the HUTF has been concerned to build links between the tenants it represents and the trades union and labour movement as a whole. So the HUTF has delegates from trades unions who have equal voting rights with the delegates from tenants associations. The HUTF wanted to continue to build these links in the enlarged organisation while the ALHE insisted that although non-tenants delegates could attend meetings they would not have full voting rights. A public meeting is to be held in the Town Hall on Wednesday 9 November when the amalgamation will be discussed.

womens aid

The building that houses Hackney Womens Aid, the only shelter in the borough for wives and mothers who are beaten by their husbands, was damaged by fire earlier this year. Since then the building has been closed and the centre has had to turn away dozens of desperate women. Hackney Council has been unforthcoming in providing a new refuge and has promised that the building that the centre was using and the building next door to it will eventually be given to the centre. However, there is still no sign that they have even begun work

on repairing the fire-damaged house, much less renovating the building next door. At the beginning of September, the centre was promised that they would be able to open up again in "six weeks". No building work has yet been started.

A government report in 1975 said that there should be one battered womens refuge place open for every ten thousand of population. This means that there should be 200 family places available in Hackney. Even when the new centre opens, it is quite obvious that the centre will be quite inadequate to deal with the problem of violence in the family.

Hackney Womens Aid needs volunteers and support for when it re-opens. Please ring Catriona Scott on 249 4802.

HACKNEY
PEOPLE'S PRESS

benefit!

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HEALTH IN HACKNEY

The NHS and how to make it work for you

HEALTH IN HACKNEY is a FREE guide to all the facilities offered by the Health Service in Hackney, and is full of information.

It is published by the City & Hackney Community Health Council and is available from them at 210 Kingsland Road, E.2, or from Centerprise, Chats Palace, Wally Foster Centre and other shops and community centres round the borough.

MORE THAN 100 PAGES - GET ONE FREE!

Kingsmead fights for facelift

The tenants of Kingsmead are fighting for the complete facelift promised for their estate over three years ago. In August 1974 the GLC announced that more than a million pounds would be spent on improving and updating conditions on the whole of Kingsmead as part of a £35 million plan for modernisation of old estates throughout London. Then came the Government's cuts - and the plan was scrapped.

Now tenants are being fobbed off with conversions of individual flats in a "package" of improvements while no attempt is being made to modernise exterior conditions on the estate. The massive blocks of flats are still as drab and

forbidding as ever, the drains still overflow, the flats are still damp, the refuse chutes are still blocked with rubbish.

Tenants have been fed up for years with the GLC's shabby treatment. After one year when more than one hundred requests for repairs were ignored the Tenants' Association set up their own surgery and ensured that complaints and repairs requests were followed up. Their surgeries are held every Tuesday at 7 pm in the Wally Foster Centre, and between three and

six cases are dealt with every week.

But the TA is not just complaining to the GLC. It is prepared to take them to court under Section 99 of the Public Health Act if it does not improve conditions in some flats. This will involve individual tenants making a complaint to a Magistrates Court. The Court will then order that the GLC have to "abate the nuisance" that they are causing - damp, condensation, overflowing drains and so on.

Individual complaints forms have

been issued and tenants are being encouraged to return them to the TA so that Court Orders can be applied for.

Kingsmead is in a mess. But it could be improved - if the GLC were to keep their promises. Many of the tenants want the estate to lose its notorious label as being one of the worst estates in Hackney. But they are having to fight for the improvements that should be theirs by right.

If the tenants unite and shout loud enough then they will force the GLC to listen.



Photo: Alan Bloomfield (HPP)

NEW FROM CENTERPRISE

WORKING LIVES

Volume Two 1945-77

Ken Jacobs (Postman): 'The good thing about being a postman is that it's a complete job. You do everything from sorting to delivering to collecting and dispatching. The work isn't split up with different people doing one little job. I like doing different things.'

Annie Spike (Housewife/Night-cleaner): 'I've cleaned toilets and I've cleaned offices. I'll do anything to bring money into my home. You can recognise an office cleaner by the scarf on her head. If she hasn't got a scarf you'll recognise her by her shopping bag. You'll see her drowsing along, because she's weary. She has got up about six in the morning, probably been to the public baths to do her washing and ironing and rushed home. Then she has gone out to do her shopping and gone home again to give the children their dinner if they don't stay at school. Now she's rushing back to give her husband his dinner.'



In 'Working Lives: Volume 2' twelve working people living in Hackney describe at length the work they do, its pressures and its occasional rewards. Volume 2 describes work done in contemporary Hackney, and includes contributions from a machinist, fish-fryer, vicar, mortuary technician, health visitor, cab driver, shop-worker, school-leaver, hairdresser, barber, postman, office cleaner and teacher.

Part of the continuing 'Peoples' Autobiography of Hackney' project, the aim of which is to build up a comprehensive picture of working class life in Hackney during this century.

NOW AVAILABLE. Paperback 95p. in bookshops.

Centerprise 136 Kingsland High Street London E.8 254 9632

WILTONS FOR THE EAST END

A few months ago the Labour GLC had all but signed the contract for restoration of the disused and crumbling Wilton's Music Hall in Stepney to the Half Moon Theatre. The Half Moon is currently based in Aldgate, in an area almost depopulated by redevelopment (see HPP no 22).

Four year campaign

Wilton's is the largest surviving Music Hall building in Europe and the Half Moon's plans were to renovate it for exhibitions, workshops, and plays as well as for music hall performances. The GLC's approval of their scheme was the climax of a four-year campaign to keep the building for the local community.

Taylor-Woodrow

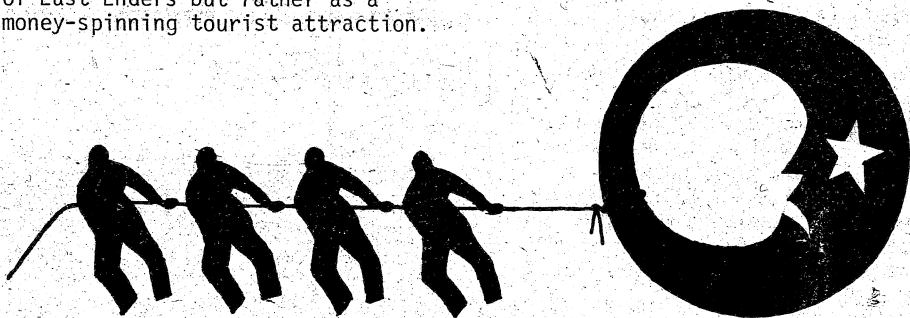
However with the Tories now in power at County Hall one of the Half Moon's backers, the massive construction company Taylor-Woodrow, has withdrawn its support and approached the GLC with its own plan. Taylor-Woodrow plan to recreate Wilton's as it was originally; that is solely as a music hall. However the popularity of the Music Hall in the East End faded in the 1880s and since that time Wilton's has been used as a Methodist Mission, a dance hall and a warehouse. The Taylor-Woodrow scheme is not aimed to use the building for the benefit of East Enders but rather as a money-spinning tourist attraction.

Indeed their renovation plans are so ambitious that it could mean completely rebuilding Wilton's on a riverside site. Many observers feel that this is a back-door means for getting the building closer to Taylor-Woodrow's massive St. Katherine's Dock development. This development, which includes the opulent 826 room Tower Hotel is now recognised to be one of the most profitable private developments in the UK. In 1973 the

Save Wilton's for the East End

Sunday Times ran an article on it estimating that the company stood to net at least £200 million on the scheme which the paper pointed out was sufficient to pay for enough council houses to wipe off Tower Hamlets waiting list three times over.

"Save Wilton's for the East End" is therefore an appropriate slogan with which the Half Moon have launched their campaign to combat the Taylor-Woodrow takeover. The Half Moon are holding a series of public meetings and have produced a play on the history of Wilton's. Although with a Conservative GLC Taylor-Woodrow must be the clear favourite for the Wilton's lease. The Half Moon have made it very clear in the opening salvo of their campaign that the East End will not give up Wilton's gracefully.



Community Papers Under Attack

The Manchester community newspaper Longsight News is seeking help and wider support for their fight against a libel action being brought against them by a local policeman because of an article they carried about him over two years ago. Seven months after the article appeared the paper was threatened with libel action and the paper offered the policeman in question, P.C. Kelly the right of reply which he declined. Instead he is now pursuing the libel action under the new Police Complaints procedure where the individual policeman can sue on the basis of a complaint made to the police. So, far from being an incident involving two individuals,

the author of the article and the policeman, the issue really is between the police as a whole and the newspaper.

In June 1975, the paper printed the article which was about a 14-year old boy suspected of breaking a window - "The person whose window had been broken, who is also a friend of the lad's family, saw him being literally dragged past her front door. She called out to the police that he was only 14 but they took no notice and dragged him right past his mother's door, into a police car and took him down to the police station. At the station he was not only questioned, but also beaten

about by a P.C. Kelly." The boy was later acquitted of the charge, and the paper emphasised that it is illegal for the police to question people under 17 without their parents being present.

This was only one incident among many and Longsight News, along with others in Manchester have long been campaigning against the level of police violence in the area. Manchester Law Centre are collecting evidence of police brutality in order to put pressure on the police. Longsight News has already collected statements from witnesses to the incident they wrote about which will be used to back the truth of the article in court. As it was, when the first 'order for directions' in the case took place on July 28 the master advised that the case be dropped. However, the police are unlikely to do this.

This is probably the first case of a community newspaper being sued by the police for libel. HPP feels that it is most important that the alter-

native press retain their right to print news they know to be true, but which Fleet Street and the like would not touch with a bargepole. The libel laws are obviously responsible to a large degree for censorship and self-censorship, ie the fear of printing an article that might incur a heavy financial penalty in court. Whatever the truth in this particular story, Longsight News printed the evidence they had and offered the accused policeman a chance to put his case. Instead, with the backing of police solicitors, P.C. Kelly is embarking on a potentially costly and lengthy court action. If other members of the Police decide to make a habit of threatening court action every time someone makes a complaint they don't like, people will soon be put off making complaints at all. Also the alternative press would be intimidated. It is this sort of suppression that Longsight News is refusing to accept.

People's News Service.

GLC. SALES BONANZA

Few Tory election promises can have been carried out quite as zealously as their pledge to offer council tenants the chance to buy their own homes.

The GLC's Housing Policy Committee has made a number of recommendations to help facilitate the rapid selling-off at discount prices many more thousands of their properties. On 28 September they decided that the period of residence required to qualify for a discount sale would be reduced from 10 years to 2 years. The entire GLC housing stock will be circulated to find out how many tenants would like to buy their own homes. A system will be developed whereby whenever a property becomes vacant a decision will be taken as to whether it is to be let or sold.

10,000 homes for sale

Finally it was decided that a further 10,000 council homes should be offered for sale to sitting tenants.

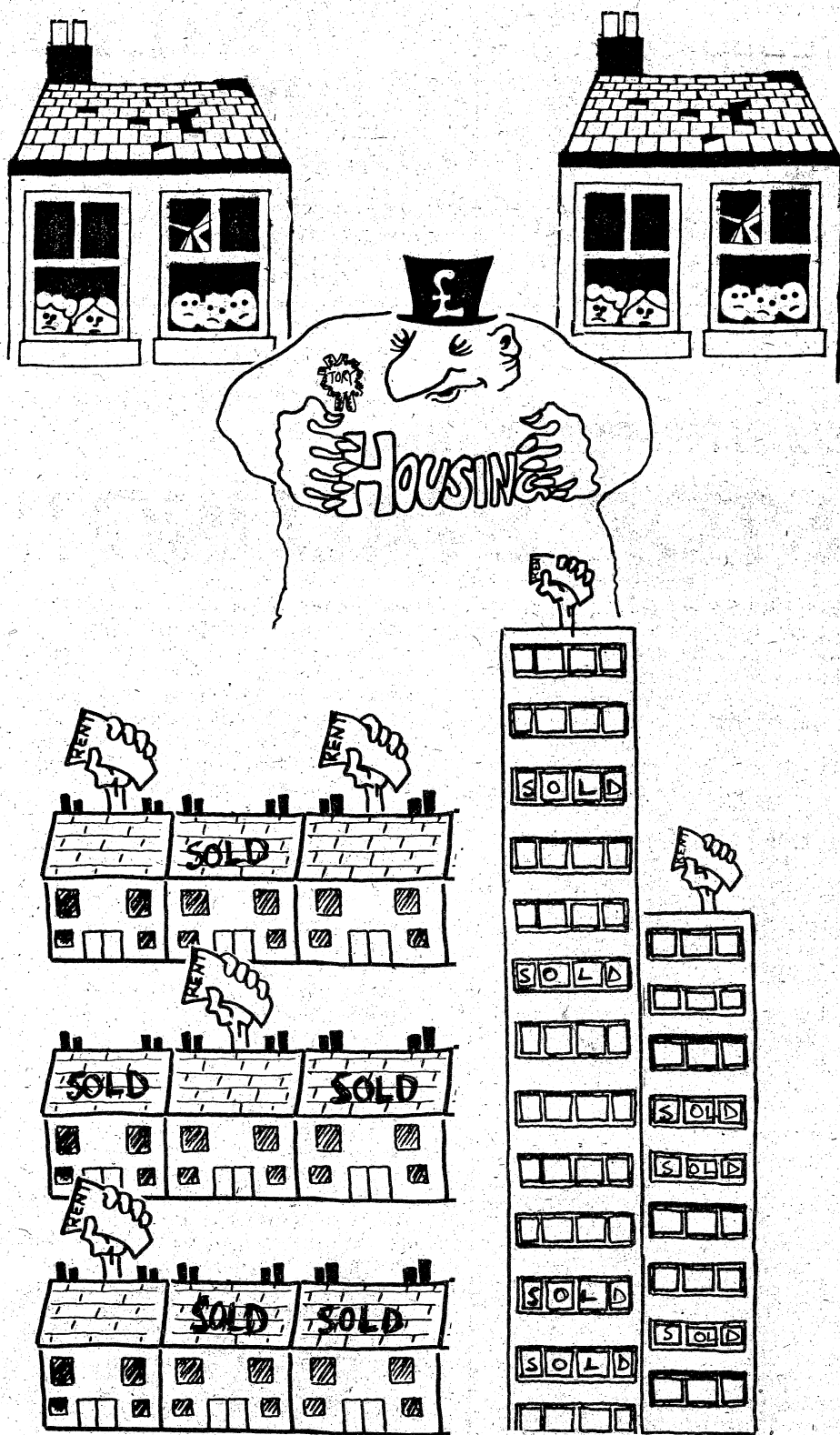
More evidence to show that the Tories "Sale of the Century" is not a passing phase is the recent reorganisation of the top administration of the GLC Housing Department. A Director of Housing (Disposals) will replace the Director of Housing (Development) to supervise that other pet Tory policy - transferring management of its Estates to the London boroughs - as well as selling council houses.

Selling council houses to sitting tenants may be electorally popular but many Labour councillors have argued that it will spell doom to any sensible housing strategy.

Borough nominations

Firstly, all boroughs nominate a fixed quota of their residents to the GLC from their waiting list, transfer list, homeless families and those waiting to be rehoused from development areas. It is in this way that

the GLC can use its vast stock of property to even out the huge differences in the needs and resources of the various boroughs. Islington Borough Council is currently exploring all possible methods including Compulsory Purchase Order to stop



the GLC selling 2000 flats and houses within its borough. The properties in question are on 5 estates, parts of which are still under construction containing a total of 3000 homes. The GLC's Northern District Office is no longer accepting applicants from Islington's waiting lists even where, so Islington claims, they have already been allocated properties. Councillor Margaret Watson, Chairperson of Islington's Housing Committee claims that in at least two cases, the Alsen and Elthorne Estates, this contravenes agreements made ten years ago between Islington and the GLC.

Rent-pooling

Secondly all council rents represent a balance between the "profit" being made out of the rents of their older dwellings and the huge losses incurred on recently built estates. The old estates were built at low cost and interest rates have been paid for many years ago. On the other hand an economic rent (even taking subsidies into account) for flats built during the period of rocketing interest charges of the late 60s and 70s would be well beyond the means of most council tenants. The practice of part of the Council's stock subsidising the remainder is called "rent-pooling" and is vital if council rents are to be kept at a reasonable level.

The Cutler dream-machine

Thus wholesale selling-off of council dwellings could be financially catastrophic especially if a large number of tenants in older properties decide to take up the option to buy.

One would have for greater confidence that the GLC will not fall into the trap of selling off all its assets and retaining its liabilities if it wasn't for that other product of the Horace Cutler dream-machine, the transfer of GLC estates to the predominantly Labour-controlled boroughs.

WALKING DOWN THE LEA

Anybody lucky enough that lives near the Lea will probably take their dog for a walk or go fishing on the bank. Early Sunday morning and you wouldn't think of walking the thirty-two mile length of the river Lea from Bishops Stortford down to the Limehouse Basin. It is pretty obvious that you wouldn't dream of doing it, unless of course you're camping, but it is a pleasant walk to the Thames starting from nearer home in Hackney or Clapton. That walk would be for people who like seeing old buildings and warehouses; going the other way towards Tottenham or Enfield is a beautiful walk for any nature fanatics or wildlife experts. We decide to go downstream towards the Thames and see what old buildings and strange discoveries we could find and what actually happens on the once busy Lea canal.

We began our journey at Homerton power station - a large building with a gigantic solitary chimney. From there we walked along the side of Hackney Marshes on the rather overgrown towpath where horses once plodded along pulling the beautiful old narrow barges. We came into an area of warehouses, most of these store wood and timber and some are still supplied by the canal. Occasionally you see tugs pulling lighters on wide barges, these huge containers sway about the river and look humorously clumsy although they can scare the life out of nervous new canoers or rowers on their first time out.

Soon we came to a junction; you can turn along the Hertford Union canal leading into Regent's canal, or carry on down the river Lea on the lovely walk that we chose. The anglers, who don't seem to care much which way they go, just sit on the corner and fish. Anyway we went straight on and passed the old ford locks, crossed a bridge and got down to the new level of the canal. There were quite a few people fishing on this little bend. They told us that there were quite a few roach, eels, chubb and carp caught there and the fishing has improved since they cleaned the Thames.

The next prominent part of the canal is the Bow flyover. You must leave the canal as it goes under a tunnel, and frantically try and cross the main road to rejoin it again on the other side. The towpath has now changed sides and is reached by a concrete path which looks private but isn't. Soon after, you come to the Three Mills which sadly doesn't run anymore because they've removed the water supply. The tidal creek starts here, and the canal runs alongside at a much higher level. They run parallel until Bow locks where the barges can join the creek or continue on down Limehouse Cut. The Cut goes straight down to Limehouse Basin, hardly used anymore except for a few barges and sailing boats. The Regent's canal together run through the Basin and into the river Thames. This was the end of our great journey, so tired but happy we caught a bus back!

If you were thinking of walking along the canal, you could of course start anywhere. It is well worth walking down to the Thames, but you could go either way and try parts we did not explore. There is a whole network of canals in London which most Londoners have not been on, and maybe only seen them from the top of a bus!

James Manlove



MANY LONDONERS ONLY KNOW THE CANALS THROUGH BRIEF GLIMPSES FROM THE TOPS OF BUSES

Photo: Anthony Cooper (HP)



The articles on this page were written for Hackney People's Press by three children who were involved in the Hackney Gasbag summer newspaper project. Plans are now underway to produce another issue of the Gasbag, which will again be distributed with the Hackney People's Press.

Once again we say, Hackney People's Press is your newspaper, the paper for the people of Hackney, and you are welcome to come and help us write and produce the paper. We hope to hear from you!

Susan & Jonathon Martin

TELL THE PLANNERS:

"STOP STALLING!"

Broadway Market was once a thriving market but now it's far from thriving. It can now only be described as one of Hackney's many deteriorating back streets. As you approach it from London Fields it's almost impossible to recognize it as being a market. When we went down there at about 12 o'clock one Saturday morning there were hardly any shoppers looking around. The stall-holders all looked very bored and didn't seem to be doing much business of any sort, and they told us that it had been the same the whole morning.

One stall-holder said, "The reason this market's got so bad is that the rent for the stalls has upped so much over the last few years, it's £4.50 now whereas just 5 years ago it was 75p at the most - people just can't afford it any more."

Broadway Market consists of only a handful of stalls. There are a couple of second-hand stalls, one of which was selling a rather extravagant pair of knickerbockers. There are a few fruit stalls but not as many as you would expect to find. Rather surprisingly there is only one stall selling toiletries and household utensils, but at very cheap realistic prices.

The street is lined with shops, many of which are boarded up and are in terrible conditions. The shops aren't doing too well either

but seemed to be doing better than the stalls. However F. Cook, a pie and eel cafe was jam packed when we went. It sells everything from meat pies at 25p, fruit pies at 12p and a super looking meal of mash potatoes, a meat pie all covered in a parsley sauce, and it's all home-made! One member of the family said, "The market's certainly deteriorated but our business is just fantastic." We were very surprised to hear that not all their customers were locals. Some people came from Harlow and Southend and took pies home with them! F. Cook seemed to be doing the best business out of the lot!

Most people blamed the Council for the deterioration of Broadway Market and looking around the pieces certainly fit. There are several premises that were bought by the Council years ago, but they are still unoccupied. The Council could do an enormous amount to bring the market up to scratch. Why should local people have to travel to Ridley Road Market or Petticoat Lane if they have what could be a perfectly good market reasonably close to them? At the moment though Broadway Market is just a shambles.

This piece of graffiti sums it up with great accuracy:

"BROADWAY MARKET IS NOT A SINKING SHIP - IT'S A SUBMARINE!"

Events and Meetings

until 19th November.. Half Moon Theatre, Alie Street, E.1. "Grand Larceny". Play about the East End and Wilton's Music Hall. See p. 4.

Friday 4 November. Hoxton Hall, 8pm. Music Hall with Prof. Alexander.

Saturday 5th November. Hackney Marshes. Fancy Dress in Nursery Rhyme Costume bonfire party - "Try again Guy Fawkes!"

Friday 11 November. Hoxton Hall, 7.30pm. The Pyramids of Egypt. An illustrated talk by Peter Clayton.

Friday 11 & Saturday 12 November. Chats Palace. Prof. Alexander's Music Hall. 8pm.

Sunday 13 November. Chats Palace, starts 11am. All day Arts Festival. Bring your own music, poems, plays, stories, food etc.

Friday 18 November. 8pm. Hoxton Hall. Our Marie. Show about Marie Lloyd.

Monday 21 November. Centerprise. 7.30pm. Co-Op meeting. Come and decide how Centerprise is run.

Tuesday 22 November. Stamford Hill Library. 8pm. Public meeting on education with Sue Slipman (NUS) and Liz McGovern (Hackney CRC).

Friday 25 November. Rio Cinema. 7.30pm. Film. "The man from Manticuy". About the Cuban revolution.

Friday 25 & Saturday 26 November. Hoxton Hall. 8pm. "A-Z". New play by Hoxton Theatre Group.

Saturday 26 November. Green Lanes Methodist Church, 132 Green Lanes, N.16. Jumble Sale, in aid of handicapped kids. 2pm.

Sunday 27 November. Half Moon Theatre 7.30pm. "Twelve Long Years". Play about Indonesian repression. Presented by Amnesty International.

Tuesday 29 November. Town Hall. Public Enquiry about the DOE compulsory purchase of back gardens in the Mapledene area.

Wednesday 30 November. Chats Palace. "Grand Larceny". Half Moon Theatre Company.

Political Groups

HACKNEY LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Hackney South.
Meet at 108 Shepherdess Walk, N.1.
Details from Amy McQuaide 253 4556.
Hackney Central.
Meets every Wednesday at 8pm at 54 Dalston Lane E.8.
Hackney North.
Meet every other Monday at 8pm at 5 Stamford Hill, N.16. Contact Mark Douglas, 103 Osbaldestone Road, N.16 for details. All welcome.

HACKNEY YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

Meets weekly. All young people welcome.

HACKNEY COMMUNIST PARTY

Twelve branches hold meetings regularly throughout the borough. All welcome.

HACKNEY MORNING STAR GROUP

Meets weekly. Organises political, social and fund-raising events in support of Britain's socialist daily paper the Morning Star. All Morning Star readers/supporters welcome.

For further information and a copy of the monthly newsletter detailing the meetings, campaigning actions etc organised by the Hackney Morning Star group, Young Communist League and Communist Party contact David Green, 126 Anhurst Road E8, tel 249 6374.

HACKNEY SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

Meet regularly in the borough. Contact Liz 739 9772 for details.

ANARCHIST WORKERS ASSOCIATION

c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E.8. Contact Dave Coull 226 0817 for details.

HACKNEY COMMITTEE AGAINST RACIALISM

All-party anti-racist campaign. Meets first Wednesday of each month at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N.16.

Information

SHOUT OUT what you are doing to the people of Hackney on this page of the HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS. All non-commercial listings are inserted FREE - for the next issue just send us your information by **FRIDAY 18th NOVEMBER.**

Write to Hackney People's Press, Box 1, c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E.8.



Community, Tenants and Pensioners Groups

HACKNEY PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION

34 Dalston Lane, E.8
Advice service on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10.30 to 4pm. Tea Bar Monday to Friday 10.30 to 4pm.

TASK FORCE

34 Dalston Lane, E.8. Tel: 254 1620
Free advice for pensioners in Hackney. Odd jobs and visits in N.16 and N.4 only. Pensioners' activities and neighbourhood care in N.5.

HACKNEY ASSOCIATION FOR WELFARE OF OLD PEOPLE

22 Dalston Lane, E.8. 254 0715.

HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT

Upper Clapton Congregational Hall, E.5.
Social and advice centre, aimed particularly at black people.
Tuesday 10am - 10pm
Thursday 10am - 4.30pm
Friday 10am - 10pm

OFF CENTRE

35 Hackney Grove, E.8 Tel: 985 8566
Advice for young people between 13 and 25 with any problems.
Monday-Friday 10am-6pm (open until 8.30pm on Tuesdays.)

FRIENDS ANONYMOUS SERVICE

Friendship House, 27 Hackney Grove, E.8
24 hour telephone service with people always willing to listen and act.
986 2233 (24 hours)
985 0973 (office hours)
986 9146

HACKNEY UNITED TENANTS FEDERATION

Contact Bob Darke, 154 Trelawney Estate, Paragon Road, E.9. for details. Represents Borough Council, GLC and private tenants throughout Hackney.

HACKNEY GINGERBREAD

Group for one parent families. Meet every Monday at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N.16. Creche available. Contact Teresa Blackhall, 729 1647 for details.

HOMERTON GINGERBREAD

Group for one parent families. Meet every other Friday at the Wally Foster Centre. Contact 985 3972 for details.

HACKNEY UNITED TENANTS ASSOCIATION

c/o 35 Finmere House, Woodberry Down, N.4.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGLISH CLASSES

Held at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N.16. 254 1193. Monday-Friday 10.30am-4.30pm.

Held at the Wally Foster Centre, E.9. 985 3972. Every Wednesday 1.30pm.

Workshops

THE WORKSHOP

81 Lenthall Road, E.8. 254 3082.
Learn to print posters, T shirts etc at non-commercial rates. Cost of materials only. Open Tuesdays- Sundays 1pm-8pm.

COMET WORKSHOP

Halcomb Street, N.1. 729 0936.
Learn sewing, macrame, toymaking, woodwork. Creche available, toy library. Tea and coffee. Open every weekday.

Health

CITY AND HACKNEY COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL

Shoreditch Health Centre, 210 Kingsland Road, E.2. 739 6308/8351.
The public's voice in the NHS - provides advice, takes up your complaints and criticisms. Open meetings on 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm.
Publishes HEALTH IN HACKNEY: a comprehensive FREE guide to health facilities and services in the area.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN HACKNEY

Advice, ideas, information. Trying to contact all families in district with a handicapped child. Contact Ann Purdon, 48 Mount Pleasant Lane, E.5. 808 8438.

THE BIRTH CENTRE

188 Old Street, EC1. 251 4076.
Information, advice, lectures and seminars on birth at home and in hospital. Open evening every Wednesday 8pm. 25p.

Advice

Free legal advice on housing, landlord and tenant, employment, social security, welfare, matrimonial, immigration and discrimination problems can be obtained from the following centres:

CENTERPRISE

136 Kingsland High Street, E.8. 254 9632
THURSDAYS 6.30-7.30pm.

HOXTON HALL

128a Hoxton Street, N.1. 739 5431
WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

KINGSMEAD

Wally Foster Centre, Homerton High St, E.9. 985 3804.
TUESDAYS 7-8pm.

SNAGS

102 Manor Road, N.16. 800 3770.
MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm. (802 7949)

ALLEN ROAD

12 Allen Road, N.16.
THURSDAYS 7-8pm.

Advice can also be obtained from:

HACKNEY ADVICE BUREAU & LAW CENTRE

236-8 Mare Street, E.8. 986 8446.
Open Monday-Friday 10am-5pm (7.30pm on Thursdays.)
Legal aid and advice on housing, rents, repairs and employment problems.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX

1-11 Hoxton Street, N.1. 739 4654.
106 Old Street, EC1. 253 2155.

HACKNEY COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

245 Mare Street, E.8. 985 5244.
TUESDAYS 7-8.30pm
Immigration, discrimination, housing, law and other problems.

THE FAMILY CENTRE

50 Rectory Road, N.16. 249 8334.
Information and help in all community problems. Cooking, washing, creche facilities. Open all day.

HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE

302-4 Mare Street, E.8. 986 8123.
Helps with all housing problems. Repairs, rebates, landlord-tenant, council-tenant.

HACKNEY CENTRAL INFORMATION BUREAU

Town Hall, Mare Street, E.8. 986 3123.

HACKNEY NORTH LABOUR PARTY ADVICE CENTRE

5 Stamford Hill, N.16.
Advice and information on legal, financial, welfare, housing, social security and personal problems.
FRIDAYS 7-8pm.

Advice can also be obtained from HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT, OFF CENTRE and FRIENDS ANONYMOUS. See Community Groups listing on this page.

Women

HACKNEY ABORTION CAMPAIGN

Meetings fortnightly at 16 Parkholme Road, E.8. Contact 249 3768 for details.

WOMEN'S CENTRE

1 Cazenove Road, N.16.
Advice, creche, children's clothes swap shop, beginners photography, crafts, yoga, relaxation, consciousness raising groups, food co-op, alternative medicine, self-defence. Further information from 806 6664. All women welcome.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

340 6145. 24 hour information and advice.

HACKNEY SOCIALIST-FEMINIST GROUP

Meets first and third Monday of each month at the Factory, Matthias Road, N.16.

HACKNEY TRADES COUNCIL WOMENS SUB-COMMITTEE

Re-formed recently. Meets once a month. Contact Judy Newcombe 254 0685 for details. All women and men welcome

Meditation

ANANDA MARGA

For spiritual progress and social change. Introduction to meditation classes every Wednesday 7.30pm at 1 Cazenove Road, N.16. Everyone welcome!

Community Centres

CENTERPRISE

136 Kingsland High Street, E.8. 254 9632.

Bookshop and office hours:
Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6.30pm.

Coffeebar and meeting room hours:
Tuesday-Friday 10am-10pm
Saturday 10am-6.30pm.

Facilities:

Coffeebar; bookshop; advice, information and contacts for individuals and groups. Typewriters can be used free, duplicating at cost price. Ask in General Office.

Advice Centre:

Legal and welfare advice session on Thursdays, 6.30-7.30pm. Contact Jon Webber or ring 254 9634.

Reading Centre:

For adults who find it hard to read or write. Contact Sue Shrapnel or ring 254 9635.

Publishing Project:

Publishing books by people who live in Hackney. Contact Ken Worpole or ring 254 9634.

Youth Project:

Table tennis, music, writing, discussion groups etc. Tuesday to Friday afternoons, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Contact Oliver Flavin.

WALLY FOSTER CENTRE

Homerton High Street, E.9. 985 3972.

Community Centre with many activities:

Social Services Advice Centre: every weekday 9am-5pm.

Adult Literacy Classes:

Every Monday at 7pm.

Also playgroup, mothers and toddlers group, pensioners lunch club, school welfare advice, youth club for 5-8 year olds, Kung Fu and juvenile dance classes.

See also ADVICE and NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGLISH CLASSES listings.

THE FACTORY

107 Matthias Road, N.16. (next to Newington Green School). 249 3066.

Runs Mothers and toddlers clubs, sewing classes, English classes, Youth Club, Childminders drop-in group (creche provided), After school club, arts and crafts club, pensioners lunch club, food co-op and an Indian dance class.

Contact them for further details.

Men

DALSTON MEN'S GROUP

Contact Pete, 39 Parkholme Road, E.8. 249 3072.

EAST LONDON/BRIXTON MEN'S GROUP

Contact Paul, 12 Montague Road, E.8. 254 9497.

EAST LONDON MEN'S CENTRE

19 Redmans Road, E.1. 790 2454.

Children

HACKNEY UNDER FIVES

c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E.8. 254 9145.
Information and support for parents with children below school age. Contact Madge Harte. Stores are available every Saturday from 10am-12.30pm. Open monthly meetings first Tuesday of every month at 8pm in Centerprise.

HACKNEY PLAY ASSOCIATION

c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E.8. 254 9145.
Information, advice and help to people organising play facilities for children. Contact Cheryl Broadway or Mo Ross.

Food

DOWN TO EARTH

Durham Row, Stepney Green, E.1.
Wholefood shop selling grains, flour, beans, honey, herbs etc.
790 3512. Monday-Saturday 9am-6pm.

FOOD FOR ALL

3 Cazenove Road, N.16.
Wholefood shop, also selling books and crafts. All food carries levy to support the women's centre next door (see WOMEN) and proposed school at 5 Cazenove Road. 806 4138.

Ecology

WASTE PAPER etc.

Take old newspaper, magazines, cardboard, clean rags and car batteries to Research into Child Blindness, Drysdale Street, N.1 (just off Hoxton Street) and get given FREE Green Shield Stamps! 2 stamps per pound of paper.
Monday-Friday 7am-4pm. Saturday 9.30-12.30pm.
All the paper YOU take in goes to help blind children to see.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

Local group: contact John Leach 739 2301.

SERA (Socialist and Environmental Resources Association.)

North East London branch meets regularly. Contact Jackie Hutson, 17 Mentmore Terrace, E.8.

Transport

HACKNEY PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACTION COMMITTEE

Meets regularly to discuss how to improve public transport in Hackney. Contact Tony Jacobs, 3 Hockley House, Morning Lane, E.9. 986 2303.

Welfare Rights

HACKNEY CLAIMANTS UNION

Meets in Centerprise every Friday at 11am. Group for all who are claiming benefit.

Education

SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Contact Beverly Bowes for details. 83 Eleanor Road, E.8.

Gays

EAST LONDON FAGGOTS

Collective of gay socialists living and working in East London. Contact 19 Redmans Road, E.1. 790 2454.

GAY SWITCHBOARD

837 7174. 24 hour information and advice.

Music and Broadcasts

ISLINGTON & HACKNEY MUSIC WORKSHOP

Sing-song third Thursday every month. 8pm. Free. The Florence, Florence St, N.1.

HACKNEY HOSPITAL RADIO

Programme Schedule:

Mon- Fri	7pm-9pm	"Pop" show
	9pm-11pm	Easy listening show
Sunday	3pm-5pm	"Pop" show
	5pm-7pm	Soul show
	7pm-8pm	Hackney's Week (local news)
	8pm-10pm	Easy listening show

Hackney Radio Roadshow: contact Gary Putwain 986 3833 or Hackney Hospital Radio 985 5555 extension 115 for details.

subscribe

to Hackney People's Press and make sure you get your copy EVERY month. Only £1.70 for ten issues - guaranteed delivery! Please make cheque/PO payable to Hackney People's Press and send it to Hackney People's Press c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E.8.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____



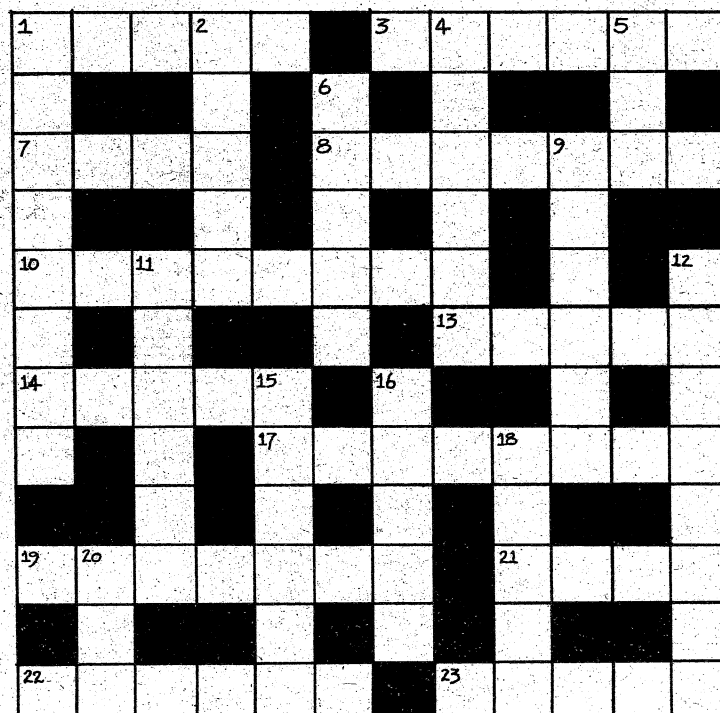
Marchers on the mass anti-fascist demonstration were entertained before the march by the Broadside Theatre Company in "Divide and Rule" and afterwards, in Victoria Park, there was a free festival with bands and troupes from many countries. Shown below are "The Explosives", a North London dance group.

Photos: Alan Bloomfield (HPP)



HPP Crossword

No.1



A prize of two tickets to the HPP benefit on 3 December will be given to the sender of the first correct entry drawn.

Entries must be sent to HPP c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St. E8, to be received by Friday 26 November 1977.

Solution in the next issue.

ACROSS

1. Remove the traveller from the bar overseas. (5)
3. Decline to accept what is left. (6)
7. Intentional 4. Down - in Guinea, that is. (4)
8. Landscape composed by Rita Ern... (7)
10. ... "Revolt" artist standing back so she can admire her work. (3,5)
13. Simpleton? Could be, if my French is adequate. (5)
14. Gains attention with two opposite points. (5)
17. Loyalist is a real navy type. (4,4)
19. Methods to produce good behaviour. (7)
21. City in the middle of a go-slow. (4)
22. Trouble? Doctor leads, just in case. (6)
23. Rocket power? (5)

DOWN

1. Disengages sappers in a tussle with 2 Down. (8)
2. See, Al? It's a frame! (5)
4. Errs - or confuses - making mistakes. (6)
5. Skill required (no learners) to take part in winter sport. (3)
6. Broke a hole in the heater. (5)
9. Creature with back of thin scale. (6)
11. Don't wear it - drink it! (6)
12. No more, ta - or you may have to wait here. (8)
15. Guides the herd. (6)
16. Breakthrough from the heads of Birmingham University Research (Science and Technology). (5)
18. Learner in a vessel - swell! (5)
20. Take action after a bit of bother. (3)

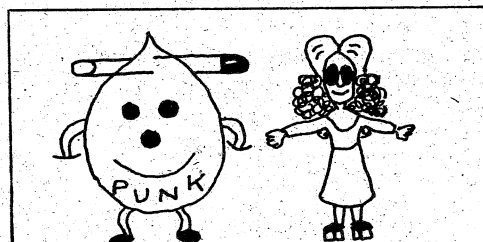
Bill the PUNK BLOB

Some of you may remember from the last issue of the HACKNEY GASBAG the infamous adventures of Bill the Blob. That action-packed episode was from his disgustingly mispent youth, at the age of 49. (Blobs mature very late). Well, the story that starts today, and which is destined to become the first HACKNEY GASBAG Soap Opera (it could be renamed "Blobroads") are from his even more revoltingly mispent adolescence.

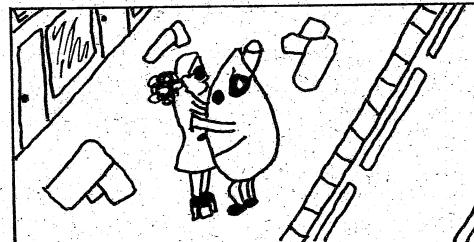
At the age of 72, Bill the Blob went Punk and formed a Punk Rock Band called Bill the Blob and the Funkie Punkies. Their first album, "Blob goes Punk", was a world-wide million-seller, and the single from the album, "Do the Punkie Gibbon" went to number one. Bill has become, to put it mildly a teenage(?) superstar. To show the extent of his popularity, Margaret Thatcher has been seen wearing a "I luv Blobbie" badge.

However just lately, Bill and the band have been periodically harassed by a group of Teddy Boys called Greasy Barnet and the Bleach Boys and this is where this thrilling, action-packed, monotonous, boring, filthy but addictive instalment begins.

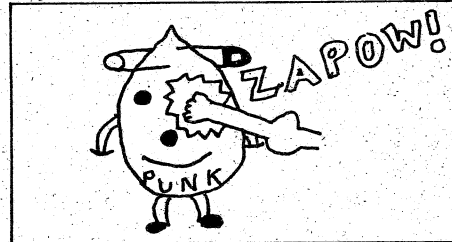
NOW READ ON....



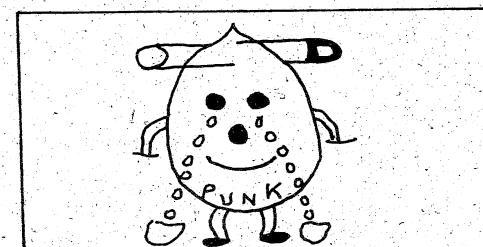
Bill was out one day with his "chick", Cruella Punk. "I must get some glue," said Bill. "OK!" said Cruella. "I'll wait outside."



The two were very much in love. They couldn't bear to be parted, even for a few minutes. So, after three hours of the obscenity shown above, Bill finally popped into Woolies.

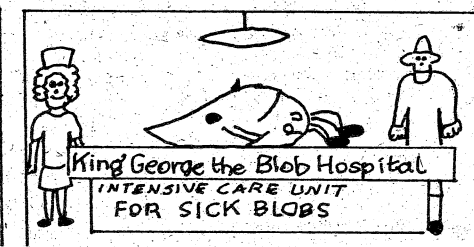


However, on coming out, Bill was punched in the face by his arch-enemy, Greasy Barnet, who sneeringly added "And we've got yer woman!"

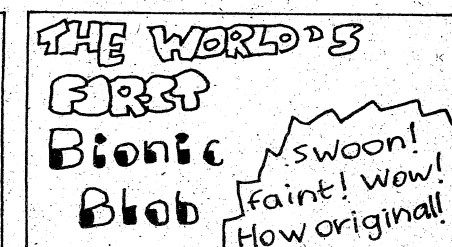


Bill was heartbroken, and he collapsed. Would he ever see his true love again? Anyway, all the doctors knew was that he was critically hurt.

By David Lawrence



He was rushed to hospital, where the only treatment possible was bionic surgery. Yes friends, we have him. We have the technology to build



Will Bill recover? What will happen to Cruella? Will the greatest screen lovers of all time be re-united? We don't know, but you might if you read the next thrilling episode!